

On Read Across America Day, we partner with the National Education Association and mark the birthday of Theodor Geisel, whose beloved Dr. Seuss books still inspire children throughout the world to read.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 2, 2009, as Read Across America Day. I call upon children, families, educators, librarians, public officials, and all the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-seventh day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8350 of March 2, 2009

Irish-American Heritage Month, 2009

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Even before the birth of our Nation, the sons and daughters of Erin departed their homes in search of liberty and a more hopeful future. As these early pioneers left familiar lands, they carried with them the rich traditions of home. This March we honor their journey and their lasting contributions to the history and culture of the United States.

Following the colonial migrations, the United States enjoyed the greatest influx of Irish during the 1840s as Ireland suffered the Great Famine. Hungry but hopeful, poor but perseverant, Irish-Americans seized the opportunity to work hard, enjoy success, and pursue the American Dream.

Many took on the difficult work of constructing America's infrastructure. Others assumed positions of leadership. Among those leaders were signers of the Declaration of Independence and Presidents of the United States. Still others enjoyed great success and influence in the arts and literature. From social activists to business leaders, athletes to clergy, and first responders to soldiers, distinguished Irish-Americans have made indelible contributions to our national identity.

Today, tens of millions of Irish-Americans can look back with pride on the legacy of their forebears. Irish-Americans are integral to the rich fabric of the United States, and we are grateful for their service and contributions.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 2009 as Irish-American Heritage Month. I encourage all Americans to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8351 of March 3, 2009

Women's History Month, 2009

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

With passion and courage, women have taught us that when we band together to advocate for our highest ideals, we can advance our common well-being and strengthen the fabric of our Nation. Each year during Women's History Month, we remember and celebrate women from all walks of life who have shaped this great Nation. This year, in accordance with the theme, "Women Taking the Lead to Save our Planet," we pay particular tribute to the efforts of women in preserving and protecting the environment for present and future generations.

Ellen Swallow Richards is known to have been the first woman in the United States to be accepted at a scientific school. She graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1873 and went on to become a prominent chemist. In 1887, she conducted a survey of water quality in Massachusetts. This study, the first of its kind in America, led to the Nation's first state water-quality standards.

Women have also taken the lead throughout our history in preserving our natural environment. In 1900, Maria Sanford led the Minnesota Federation of Women's Groups in their efforts to protect forestland near the Mississippi River, which eventually became the Chippewa National Forest, the first Congressionally mandated national forest. Marjory Stoneman Douglas dedicated her life to protecting and restoring the Florida Everglades. Her book, *The Everglades: Rivers of Grass*, published in 1947, led to the preservation of the Everglades as a National Park. She was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1993.

Rachel Carson brought even greater attention to the environment by exposing the dangers of certain pesticides to the environment and to human health. Her landmark 1962 book, *Silent Spring*, was fiercely criticized for its unconventional perspective. As early as 1963, however, President Kennedy acknowledged its importance and appointed a panel to investigate the book's findings. *Silent Spring* has emerged as a seminal work in environmental studies. Carson was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom posthumously in 1980.

Grace Thorpe, another leading environmental advocate, also connected environmental protection with human well-being by emphasizing the vulnerability of certain populations to environmental hazards. In 1992, she launched a successful campaign to organize Native Americans to oppose the storage of nuclear waste on their reservations, which she said contradicted Native American principles of stewardship of the